

## **What do respondents and non-respondents think of incentives and how do they react to them? The ESS experience in Poland\***

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One method to increase the response rate in surveys is to use respondent incentives. The effectiveness of incentives depends on a number of factors which, however, may have a varied impact on respondents' decisions about survey participation across countries. This paper shows how respondent incentives have worked in Poland, i.e. how monetary and material incentives are viewed, whether or not it is reasonable to send prepaid incentives by mail and how incentives affect the structure of the effective sample. Results of in-depth interviews and comments on to incentives used in the European Social Survey have shown that the respondents who are willing to accept a small material incentive do not accept a modest monetary incentive. In the case of monetary incentives, expectations are very high and, in most surveys, unrealistic. Research results also suggest that some respondents are distrustful about prepaid incentives received by mail. They associate such incentives with direct marketing practices, attempted fraud or scams. From this perspective, it seems safer to opt for incentives being handed over personally by interviewers. However, the use of incentives does not significantly affect the structure of the effective sample.

**Key words:** incentives in surveys; response rate; European Social Survey.

## THE PROBLEM

The ever declining response rate in surveys motivates researchers to employ a variety of strategies in an attempt to increase it or, at least, to hamper its decline. Researchers can choose from a broad array of options which may potentially help to boost the response rate (for an overview for face-to-face surveys, see, e.g., Koch et al. 2010), yet only two of such options focus directly on the respondent. Those methods include letters motivating the respondents to take part in a survey (advance letters in most cases or, less frequently, follow-up letters sent to refusers) and respondent incentives. While the results of a survey conducted among active International Social Survey Program (ISSP) members showed that the use of incentives is not considered to be the most effective way of maximising the response rate (interviewer training is usually considered as such (Smith 2007)), yet incentives are increasingly used in research practice. In the case of Europe, this may be illustrated by data from the European Social Survey (ESS). Out of the 16 countries participating in all five ESS rounds conducted to date, seven countries used incentives in ESS 1 (2002), ten did so in ESS 3 (2006) and 13 opted for this solution in ESS 5 (2010).

Undoubtedly, the use of respondent incentives does help to boost the response rate in surveys. This trend has been established in the case of mail surveys (Kanuk and Berenson 1975, Heberlein and Baumgartner 1978, Yu and Cooper 1983, Fox et al. 1988, Church 1993, Jobber et al. 2004), as well as interviewer-mediated (face-to-face and telephone mode) surveys (Singer et al. 1999, Singer et al. 2000, Curtin et al. 2007). The latter two studies demonstrated that an increase in the response rate did not result from interviewer expectations (i.e. interviewers' feeling more confident knowing that the respondent has received an incentive) but, rather, followed directly from the effect that incentives had on the respondents. Studies also suggest that a higher response rate driven by incentives stems not as much from non-contacts reduction but, rather, from refusals reduction (Shettle and Mooney 1999, Singer et al. 2000, Willimack et al. 1995).

A researcher who intends to use respondent incentives must make a few important decisions which might, or might not, improve the response rate. The most important questions to be answered are as follows: Should the incentive be monetary or material (a gift)? Should this be a prepaid incentive (i.e. received by the respondent before deciding on participation) or a promised incentive, received after giving consent to participation (in mail surveys: after returning the completed questionnaire)? Researchers must also consider the consequences of using incentives, most notably regarding the sample composition.

The meta-analysis results presented in Singer et al. (1999) with regard to interviews show that monetary incentives have a clearly stronger effect on

improving the response rate in comparison with gifts. Even though gifts used in surveys are usually of a lower value, this finding also holds when their value is controlled. Higher effectiveness of monetary incentives is also suggested by analyses focusing on mail surveys (Church 1993). However, the use of monetary incentives in surveys is not always possible or appropriate. As noted by Brennan (2010), some countries forbid sending cash by mail and, moreover, sending cash is not appropriate, for instance, in surveys conducted for voluntary organisations, surveys concerning financial issues or those conducted among low-income respondents.

Analyses concerning the size of monetary incentives rendered ambiguous results. Findings by Singer et al. (1999), much like previous studies conducted by Church (1993) for mail surveys, found linear effects of incentives in interviews, i.e. a higher sum would result in a higher response rate. However, other analyses and experiments have not confirmed that finding. Based on a review of 30 research papers, Fox et al. (1988) found that the use of token monetary incentives increases the response rate as the sum goes up, yet the returns effect declines. Similar findings were reported by Warriner et al. (1996). While the use of an incentive of \$5 achieved a greater increase in the response rate than an incentive of \$2, the incentives of \$5 and \$10 produced similar outcomes. In view of the declining returns effect, the authors formulated a hypothesis that an incentive of an excessive size no longer invokes the norms of reciprocity but, instead, transforms into remuneration for participation in the survey. More recent experiments (Brick et al. 2005, Curtin et al. 2007) have brought similar findings. However, the experiments by Trussel and Lavrakas (2004) indicate that the effect of monetary incentives is linked with prior disposition towards research. The respondents who already had a positive disposition (i.e. agreed to participate during a prior contact) were more likely to take part in the survey even without any information on incentives in comparison with those who initially refused and then received a \$10 incentive.

The performance of material incentives is hard to assess in the same way as the effects of monetary incentives since there are hardly any limitations in choosing the former kind of such incentives. Brennan and Charbonneau (2009) point out, however, that incentives in mail surveys should be not only attractive for the respondents but also inexpensive, easy to process and send by mail, which considerably limits the available choices. Incentives such as tea bags and coffee sachets, which met the latter two conditions, turned out to perform poorly in driving the response rate, whether among the general public or volunteers (Gendall et al. 1998, Brennan et al. 2007). On the other hand, a small foil-wrapped chocolate bar attached to the cover letter boosted the response rate by 7.3 points vis-à-vis the control group (Brennan and Charbonneau 2009, Brennan 2010). In face-to-face and telephone surveys analysed by Singer et al. (1999), the material incentives offered

included diaries, calendars, calculators and ballpoint pens. However, they turned out to be less effective than monetary incentives. Dillman (2000: 169) suggests that ballpoint pens are the most common type of gift in research practice, which might influence the general perception of the effect of gifts on driving the response rate.

Lottery tickets<sup>1</sup> are a special kind of material incentives. As shown in the overview presented by Singer and Kulka (2000) and by Singer (2002a), experiments with the use of such incentives produce inconsistent results with regard to improvements in response rate. Worth adding is that a different kind of unusual incentive, i.e. charitable donations on behalf of the respondents, produced a very weak effect on the response rate (Warriner et al. 1996)

The choice between a prepaid or a promised incentive is the next important decision to be made by researchers. Prepaid incentives are usually sent together with a mail questionnaire whereas those used in interviewer-mediated surveys are mailed together with an advance letter. The meta-analysis results reported by Church (1993) showed that the use of promised incentives in mail surveys has little effect on the response rate, which is in contrast with prepaid incentives. An opposite conclusion follows from the meta-analysis for face-to-face and telephone surveys presented in Singer et al. (1999). Prepaid incentives turned out to be as effective as promised incentives in increasing the response rate. However, a comparison of experiments where such prepaid and promised incentives were used showed that the former was significantly more effective. Also, prepaid incentives turned out to perform significantly better in the experiment described by Singer et al. (2000).

The use of incentives may, however, arouse concerns regarding their effect on sample composition (Groves 2006, Groves et al. 2006). Studies on this subject render mixed results. As regards mail questionnaires, Nederhof (1983), who reviewed five socio-demographics, religion, political creed and experience in surveys in the context of incentives, found an effect on sample composition only for education and occupation. In a series of experiments by Lesser et al. (2001), the use of incentives in most cases reduced the discrepancy between the effective sample and the drawn sample in comparison with a situation when no incentives were used, and an increase was noted only in few cases. However, those experiments covered only two or three characteristics. Mike Brennan and Jan Charbonneau (2010), who considered four socio-demographics, found no effect of incentives on sample composition for any of those variables. The findings for interviews are similar. Willimack et al. (1995) compared the effect of a gift on sample composition by location and found no differences between urban dwellers and people living in the surroundings suburbs. Singer et al. (2000) also found no effect of incentives on sample composition by socio-demographics except for education. The effect of incentives was stronger among less educated respondents, who are underrepresented in most surveys. Likewise, no effect of incentives on

sample composition occurred in the study by Curtin et al. (2007). Summing up, those findings suggest that the use of incentives either has no effect on sample composition or is a stronger driver for those categories of respondents who are usually underrepresented, thus improving the sample composition.

When it comes to Europe, research practice is often different from the results of the aforementioned experiments. One example is the European Social Survey (ESS) project where a wide variety of incentives and related rules are applied. Some countries use cash, others opt for vouchers (e.g. high street shopping vouchers, train vouchers, flower vouchers, dinner vouchers), still others use donations to a charity organisation or lottery tickets (an opportunity to win cash, laptops, weekend trips etc.). Some countries have used gifts such as jigsaw puzzles, T-shirts and caps, calendars, calculators or brochures containing a substantive analysis of results from previous ESS rounds. In some countries the incentives are identical for all the respondents whereas in others the respondents are given a choice from two or more options. Finally, some countries use prepaid incentives, others opt for promised incentives and yet others use both (the latter in the case of refusers). In some countries, prepaid incentives are sent by mail whereas in others they are handed over by the interviewer.

This diversity of practices with respect to incentives may stem from a variety of reasons. For instance, it may result from different legal regulations across countries (e.g. some countries prohibit cash in mailed letters or prohibit cash as a reward offered to survey respondents), budget constraints faced by researchers (material incentives usually have a lower value than monetary incentives; the same applies to lottery tickets i.e. when the value of the prizes is subdivided by the number of respondents), or different cultural backgrounds and related differences in respondents' reactions to various kinds of incentives. Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that the vast majority of experiments quoted above were conducted in the United States and Canada.

In this paper, we will draw on the methodology research (quantitative and qualitative) conducted in connection with the ESS to show how incentives have worked in Poland, i.e. what respondents and non-respondents think about monetary and material incentives, how the incentives used to date have performed and how much they have affected sample composition.

## **THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY IN POLAND**

The European Social Survey (ESS) is an academically-driven cross-national social survey aimed to monitor a broad spectrum of social issues affecting people living in European countries. The ESS, commenced in 2002, has been conducted once in two years, with 22 (round one) to over 30 (round five) participating countries.

The ESS has been fielded in the face-to-face mode (PAPI or CAPI) on random samples of individuals aged 15+. The ESS questionnaire comprises core modules, repeated in each round and representing approx. 2/3 of its length, and rotating modules which change from round to round and represent approx. 1/3 of the total questionnaire. An ESS interview usually lasts approx. 60 to 75 minutes.

Poland has participated in all ESS rounds to date. The ESS in Poland is conducted on an area probability sample of approx. 2,500 individuals, drawn from official registers. Since the first round, fieldwork has been conducted by the Centre of Sociological Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences. The Polish Academy of Sciences is a well-known and renowned institution recognised by the broad public. The fieldwork commences each time in early October and takes approx. 2.5–3 months.

In all rounds, the ESS has been conducted according to a similar rigorous research design, aimed at maximising the response rate. In Poland, the design involves distribution of advance letters, interviewers' participation in a face-to-face briefing session covering a training module on door-step interaction and refusal conversion, high and progressive remuneration for interviewers (depending on their individual response rate achieved), an incentive system for interviewers, covering both financial and non-financial rewards, at least four contact attempts with hard-to-reach sampled persons and a long fieldwork period. Throughout the fieldwork period the interviewers' work is monitored and systematically controlled in the field. As a result, the response rate<sup>2</sup> in ESS 1 (2002) reached to 73.2%, and 73.7% in ESS 2 (2004).

However, like in most other countries, Poland has seen a systematic decline in response rates (de Leeuw and de Heer 2002). In the past ten years or so this trend has been particularly visible. It is reflected in data from the Polish General Social Survey (PGSS) which, as the ESS, is conducted by an academic institution (University of Warsaw). Between 1995 and 2005, the response rate fell by nearly 18 points and dropped by eight more points between 2005 and 2008 (Cichomski et al. 2009). In order to counteract the decreasing response rate in the European Social Survey, two changes were introduced starting from ESS 3 (2006). The first one consisted in sending two advance letters before the interviewer's visit in an attempt to counteract the dwindling of the motivation to participate in the survey among the sampled persons (Sztabinski 2011). The second change consisted in the use of incentives.

The decision by the Polish ESS team to use incentives was based on the following general rules:

- (i) Material incentives rather than monetary incentives should be used, for two reasons. Firstly, considering the research budget, we were able to spend approx. PLN 6–8 (EUR 1.5–2) per incentive. We were afraid that a small size

of monetary incentives might irritate the respondents and, consequently, reduce the response rate. Secondly, we wanted to use an unconditional incentive (see below) and had to bear in mind that it is not legal in Poland to send cash inside a letter.

- (ii) The incentive should be unconditional, i.e. given to each sampled person, regardless of her/his decision about survey participation. However, we decided that the incentives should be handed over by the interviewer personally rather than sent by mail. There were two reasons behind that decision. Firstly, the mailing costs would have driven the costs of the survey. Secondly, in urban areas where the vast majority of flats have buzzers at the entrance door, this solution opened an opportunity for face-to-face contact, also in case of a refusal. When hearing a refusal, the interviewer was instructed to say that he/she was required to leave a keepsake for the respondent as a reminder of being drawn for the survey. Considering the important role of interviewers in the sampled persons' decisions regarding participation, we hoped that face-to-face contact, especially involving an incentive, would make it harder for the sampled persons to refuse.

If the sampled person was absent during the contact, the interviewer was required to leave the gift to the household members or to some other contacted person. The instruction was the same in cases where the sampled person was away for a long time, had moved to another address etc. While in some such cases the incentive would never reach the actual sampled person (e.g. cases of address change), the idea was to establish rapport with the people who received the gift. We hoped that those individuals would facilitate our contact with the sampled person and describe the survey participation request in positive light.

- (iii) Gifts should be as versatile as possible rather than adapted to selected target groups. Gifts focused on specific target groups could have had a negative effect on sample composition, causing overrepresentation of certain groups.
- (iv) A choice of gifts should be offered (from among three available options). The results of our earlier experiment, conducted in connection with the pilot study before ESS 3, indicated that when the respondents are given a choice of gifts, this may play an important role in increasing the response rate. In the said experiment, a half of randomly drawn sampled persons (345) received a calculator with a ruler from the interviewer whereas the other half (344 sampled persons) did not receive any gift. Contrary to expectations, the effective sample size in both subgroups was nearly identical: 62.3% for the experimental group and 63.4% for the control group. We knew from the ESS 3 main study that the gift was attractive for the respondents (when offered as one of three options, it was chosen by the largest percentage of the respondents:

56.8%), so one of the possible reasons for comparable scores was that no choice of gifts was offered.<sup>3</sup> Incidentally, the idea to offer a choice of gifts seems to be in line with the theory of social exchange elaborated by Dillman (2000: 15–17), as a choice between gifts represents an additional reward for the respondent.

- (v) The selection of gifts is crucial. Dillman (2000: 250) formulates a hypothesis that lower effectiveness of such gifts versus monetary incentives results from the inability to tailor gifts to respondents' interests. Market research experience in Poland has shown that material incentives should not look like small gifts purchased in the local equivalent of 'dollar stores' (MillwardBrown SMG/KRC: personal communication). Therefore, those should not be alarm clocks, calculators or similar common items. A gift in a survey must come in a package with a printed logo of the research institution and/or the survey, which would additionally distinguish it from 'dollar store' goods and, moreover, indicate its connection with the survey. In ESS 3 (2006) we used the following gifts: (i) a calculator with a ruler, 20 cm long, scaled in centimetres and inches, in grey colour, (ii) a foldable pen in blue, green or pink colour (at respondent's choice) on a lanyard, and (iii) a wall calendar with a landscape photo. Each of the 12 calendar sheets featured the previous, current and next month. The decision to choose a calendar as a gift option was reasonable since each ESS round is conducted in autumn and winter, towards the end of the calendar year.

In ESS 4, the following gifts were used in Poland: a calculator with a ruler (exactly the same as in ESS 3), a pocket calendar with a green or blue cover (to choose from) and a wall calendar. This time the calendar featured the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences, with the monument of Copernicus, the famous astronomer, in front of the building. This place is among the best-known tourist attractions included in most sight-seeing tours around Warsaw. As a result of this choice, the fieldwork organisation became less anonymous for the respondents.

In ESS 5 gifts used in Poland included a calendar (very similar to that offered in ESS 4), a key ring with a small torch and a notepad with a pen, made from recycled paper, the latter aiming to make a positive impression on the respondents.

The validity of each gift sets had been previously checked in the pilot study.

Despite the declining response rates in Poland, those incentives plus, perhaps, also the two advance letters, helped to curb the decline in the ESS. The response rate in ESS 3 (2006) amounted to 70.2%, 71.2% in ESS 4 (2008) and 70.3% in ESS 5 (2010).



## **THE DATA**

In order to assess the performance of incentives in Poland and, consequently, to check some of the general rules adopted, we will use two kinds of empirical evidence. The first set comprises data on gifts collected by interviewers during the ESS 3 and ESS 5 fieldwork. For each of the interviews allocated to them, the interviewers were required to record how the respondents reacted to the gifts, whether or not the gift was accepted, which gift was chosen and what kind of comments were made. Sampled persons' comments quoted below are marked accordingly as coming either from ESS 3 or ESS 5.

The second type of empirical data are individual in-depth interviews (IDIs) conducted with non-respondents and converted refusers from ESS 3 and ESS 4. Those categories are particularly important considering that incentives are intended to motivate the sampled persons to participate in the survey. Participants of IDIs conducted after the ESS 3 were recruited in connection with the follow-up survey, conducted approximately one month after completion of the ESS fieldwork. As part of the follow-up survey, a mail questionnaire was sent to non-respondents and converted refusers. It contained some questions from the ESS questionnaire. An additional letter was attached in order to explain the purpose of the depth interviews and to invite the recipients to take part. An incentive of PLN 100 (approx. €25) was offered for participation. In total, 15 IDIs with persons from various regions of Poland were conducted: 7 with hard refusers, 2 with converted refusers, and 6 with non-contacted persons.

After ESS 4, IDIs were conducted only with hard refusers, recruited by telephone, on the basis of interviewers' fieldwork notes from the ESS main study. As recruitment was performed by telephone, it only covered cases where the sampled person's telephone number was available (obtained from that person or via proxy). As an incentive to take part in the IDI, each participant received PLN 150 (approx. EUR 40). In total, 15 IDIs were conducted after ESS 4. The verbatim statements quoted later are marked accordingly: IDI number /2007 or IDI number /2009.

Each in-depth interview took about 2 hours and was conducted in accordance with a specially designed guide which, among others, included questions on gifts and monetary incentives in surveys.

## **MONETARY OR MATERIAL INCENTIVES?**

In Poland, incentives are used relatively rarely in surveys. They are sometimes used in those market studies which entail a considerable burden for the respondents (e.g. apart from participating in an interview, the respondents are required to complete a multi-page questionnaire, run a diary for a fairly long period of time) and in panel studies. In such cases, the respondents normally receive material incentives

or, less commonly, they receive gift vouchers worth approx. PLN 15–20 (approx. EUR 4–5). Therefore, the Polish public has had little exposure to incentives in surveys. On the other hand, incentives are widely used in other spheres of life: by newspapers and magazines (especially colour press) or by hypermarkets and other chain stores.

Prior to presenting opinions regarding the use of monetary or material incentives in surveys, it is important to stress that those opinions derive mostly (albeit not exclusively) from IDIs conducted with non-respondents (initial or final) in the European Social Survey in Poland. The vast majority of them were hard refusers. Therefore, the opinions presented below probably do not exhaust the entire spectrum of opinions held by members of the Polish public. However, considering that the use of incentives is aimed at boosting the response rate, opinions on incentives expressed by non-respondents, notably refusers, are of particular importance.

The IDIs and comments made in connection with gifts in ESS 5 suggest that opinions regarding the use of incentives are divided. Some (few) respondents of our studies reject any incentives altogether. This attitude is driven by two types of motivations. Some comments indicate that participation in surveys is seen as a kind of ‘duty to the public’, which should not entail any reward. Here are a few sample opinions of this kind. *‘A thank-you gift in a typical survey feels, sort of, awkward. It’s like paying people to go to the elections. One has a negative reaction to it’* (IDI 3/2007. M, 31 y.o., secondary educ., police administrator, city 200–499K); *‘I’m doing a survey but not for a gift’* (ESS 5. F, 38 y.o., city 200–499K, gift rejected, agreed to be interviewed); *‘If you ask me, a survey should not be done for any material benefits. It’s OK to get a pen with the name of the Polish Academy of Sciences on it. Or there could be a thank-you paper, like a diploma.’* (IDI 15/2009. M, age: refused, secondary educ., secret services, city 200–499K).

Other respondents who were against incentives made a negative ethical judgment, believing that an incentive might be an attempt to influence people’s decisions about taking part in a survey. *‘I’m not really in favour /of using incentives/ because I think that this creates an obligation for me. If I feel like it, I’d answer a few questions.’* (IDI 12/2009. F, 40 y.o., post-secondary educ., accountant, city 100–199K); *‘That’s not ethical, that’s bribery, but it works. It’s good for the purpose we want to achieve but, I’d say, it’s a no-no from the ethical perspective.’* (IDI 8/2007. F, 28 y.o., univ. educ., acad. researcher, city 200–499K); *‘If I accepted it, I would be committing myself.’* (ESS 5. M, 34 y.o., village, gift accepted, refused to get interviewed); *‘Are you trying to bribe me?’* ESS 5. M, 57 y.o., village, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed).

However, the vast majority of the respondents accepted incentives, with some of them preferring gifts and others opting for monetary incentives. Those who

preferred gifts invoked a variety of arguments. Some of them pointed out that participation in a survey is a one-time event which does not take much time and is not a burden, so a small gift is quite sufficient. Here are some comments in this vein: *'It all depends on how long they will take and how often they will come. But I think that if someone comes to visit me at home and does a survey with me, and I agree, and I spend my time, it would be enough for them to give me that small gift. It would be a different story if I had to spend the whole day, though'* (IDI 1/2007., F, 36 y.o., basic vocal. educ., homemaker, city 500–999K); *'Money is the thing that people find most convincing. But when I do a survey like this, then probably a gift would be fine. Perhaps a key ring, something to go with the keys. Small and inexpensive. What kind of costly thing can be offered for completing this kind of survey? /.../ I don't care if I get the PLN 20 /≈€5/ or not, that's not important to me. However, a gift is something that makes people more willing.'* (IDI 20/2007. M, 67 y.o., basic vocal. educ., retired, city 100–199K).

Other people who were in favour of using gifts argued that paying for a conversation was not appropriate. They stressed two aspects in this context. The first one was that the interviewer was visiting the respondent at home, just to talk. The respondents saw this event as analogous to having a guest with whom opinions on a variety of topics would be exchanged. It is fine to accept a small gift from a guest but money is inappropriate. This approach is illustrated by the following comments: *'If someone wanted to give me money for coming to my place and talking to me, I would view the whole paying thing negatively./.../ Certainly not money. /A gift is OK but:/ Inexpensive, something that would create a good impression'* (IDI 3/2007. M, 31 y.o., secondary educ., police officer, city 200–499K); *'That thing could take a different dimension. A gadget. If someone visited me and offered PLN 15 /≈€4/ for this kind of meeting, I'd rather get a pen. Even one that's worth PLN 1 /≈€ 0.25/'* (IDI 26/2007. M, 22 y.o., secondary educ., military man, city 200–499K).

Other IDI participants felt that paying for opinions involved some kind of a threat. This may stem from the belief that someone who pays for opinions expects to get 'the right answers', in line with expectations. *'A gift. It is non-committal, it's a gadget that doesn't mean anything. Money would be suspicious. Like someone paying for my views'* (IDI 22/2007. F, 50 y.o., secondary educ. business owner, town 50–99K); *'Money? That would be too much of a commitment for me.'* (IDI 12/2009. F, 40 y.o., post-secondary educ., accountant, city 100–199K).

Another argument in favour of using gifts is that they represent a keepsake while a small monetary incentive has no significance for the household budget and, as such, is quickly forgotten. *'I'd rather get one of those things /gifts/. Even if they're lower in value. When you have PLN 20 /≈€5/ in your hand, it hardly makes sense to go to the shops. Even though I don't earn much, personally. This*

*is a small amount of money so it won't raise my living standard or anything. And a gift makes a nice keepsake.*' (IDI 11/2007. F, 27 y.o., secondary educ., seamstress village); *'Money disappears quickly anyway whereas a calendar will remind you all year long that you took part in that survey.'* (IDI 19/2007. F, 71 y.o., secondary educ. retired, city 200–499K); *'Gifts are a better idea. I could do with something like that. I wouldn't buy that kind of thing myself but it would be nice to get it.'* (IDI 12/2007. M, 56 y.o., secondary educ., car mechanic, city 200–499K).

Two issues are worth stressing in connection with the verbatim statements quoted above. Firstly, the phenomenon of oversurveying is not relevant to Poland, at least when it comes to face-to-face surveys (Sztabinski 2006), which is why participation in a survey may be viewed as a memorable event. Secondly, this kind of argumentation is given not only by elderly citizens who might be socially isolated. As we will demonstrate later, it is fairly common in the Polish society to treat a gift as a keepsake.

Arguments in favour of monetary incentives are not very varied: money is better, more motivating, and can be used to buy anything. However, it is worthwhile distinguishing between two categories of respondents here. The first category includes people who unconditionally choose a monetary incentive but they expect a significant sum of money. While the actual expected amounts might vary, they always exceed the budgets of standard surveys. It is worth stressing that some IDI respondents would not consider participation if the sum of money offered as an incentive turned out to be too low for them. *'I'd rather get money than a gift. Money is something people need. PLN 100 /=€25/. I don't need more. /How about PLN 25?/=€6/ I'd say 'No thanks'. I wouldn't be interested.'* (IDI 3/2009. M, 25 y.o., secondary educ., real estate administrator, city 500–999K); *'This is one hour and a quarter. Five quarters. PLN 25 /=€6/* (IDI 13/2007. M, 17 y.o., lower secondary educ., student, city 200–499K); *'Nowadays people prefer cash. If you've got money, you can buy anything. /Incentive for a 75-minute interview/ More than PLN 50 /=€12.5/. About a hundred. /=€25/*' (IDI 23/2007. M, 61 y.o., primary educ., retired, town 20–49K); *'It all depends on the kind of gift. When you run a business, you get lots of gadgets, even much better ones /than those used in the ESS/. Such rewards wouldn't motivate me to do anything. Let them / interviewers/ give me PLN 50 /=€12.5/ and I don't mind taking the survey.'* (IDI 2/2009. M, 37 y.o., secondary educ., business owner, city 100–199K); *'/Gifts at ESS/ Those things are available. Anyone has that. Money. PLN 100–150 /=€ 25–37.5/. /Would PLN 20–25 /=€ 5–6/ be appropriate?/ No. I wouldn't let anyone in for PLN 25.'* (IDI 1/2009. F, 25 y.o., univ. educ., teacher, city 500–999K).

The second category of people who are in favour of monetary incentives also consider them more motivating yet they are also willing to accept a gift. *'/Monetary incentive/ That would be quite an argument. /The sum/ It all depends on where that*

*person lives. PLN 50 /=€12.5/ for an hour. To encourage them /the respondents/. But I'd certainly take a gift, too. A small one.'* (IDI 9/2007. M, 16 y.o., primary educ., student, city 500–999K); *'Any gift is nice. It would surely motivate some people out there. And me, too. /Is a pen drive a good idea?/ I wouldn't accept it. It must be a small thing. /Would you accept cash?/ Yes. PLN 50 /=€12.5/ per hour.'* (IDI 10/2009. M, 25 y.o., secondary educ., blue collar, town 20–49K); *'A gift/ is a nice gesture, simply. But people would certainly be more willing /to take part in surveys/ for a fee, however small. So it's money, after all. From PLN 40 /=€10/ per hour.'* (IDI 5/2009. F, 29 y.o., univ. educ., business owner, city 500–999K); *'A gift/ leaves a positive impression after the talk. The gift should be small. A tiny thing but it's important to have it. /Monetary incentive/ This is certainly more beneficial for the person being surveyed. /Sum of incentive/ If someone called me and said I'd get PLN 5 /=€1.25/ that would be ridiculous. But PLN 30 /=€7.5/ already sounds good.'* (IDI 4/2009. M, 18 y.o., secondary educ., student, town up to 10K).

People belonging to that category view monetary incentives and gifts differently. In the case of monetary incentives they do not only expect a significant sum of money but, in some cases, also make a personal calculation on the basis of the duration of the interview. As regards gifts, everyone stresses that it should be a small item. This shows that monetary and material incentives are viewed on different plains: the former is seen as remuneration for survey participation whereas the latter appears to be a nice, small item received in return for participation.

Two participants of our in-depth interviews associated the use of monetary versus material incentives with the type of fieldwork organisation. The first of those respondents who, incidentally, considers survey participation to be a duty to the society, accepts small gifts in the case of a public institution but strongly rejects expensive gifts and cash. *'A 'no' to cash, a 'yes' to a gift. A gift is usually cheaper but gives people a moment of pleasure. /.../ If the Polish Academy of Sciences gave away money or some expensive stuff, that would be a waste of public money, our money.'* (IDI 18/2007.F, 73 y.o, univ. educ., retired, city 200–499K). The second participant felt that a small gift would be appropriate for a scientific/academic institution whereas a considerable monetary incentive would be expected from a commercial organisation. *'It depends on the organisation. It should be a small thing if from the Polish Academy of Sciences. All of science and research is short of money. It may seem to be a trifle but they have to spend money on that so this thing /a small gift/ seems more appropriate to me. Offering a tiny gift with their logo is better than PLN 100. Cash makes me think of commercial research but in this case it would be a really small gift.'* (IDI 14/2009. M, 36 y.o., secondary educ., printing house worker, city over 1 million). Those comments suggest that the Polish public (or at least its more educated members) is beginning to distinguish between types of surveys and their sponsors. This was also reflected in opinions expressed

during IDIs where most participants declared their willingness to take part in public opinion research conducted by reputable institutes known from the media while being reluctant to participate in market research. In the case of incentives, there is an increasing awareness that opinions expressed in market studies are used for commercial purposes, in contrast with academic studies or public opinion polls, where the results are made available to the public. Therefore, some of the respondents do not see why they should participate in commercial (market) studies without any compensation or in return for only a small gift or a low monetary incentive. This conclusion is confirmed by the experience of MillwardBrown SMG/KRC in running the Target Group Index (TGI®) study. An increasing number of respondents taking part in the interview (approx. 40 minutes) followed by a self-administered questionnaire demand a monetary incentive, usually amounting to approx. PLN 100 /= €25/ (Beata Wielkopolan: personal communication).

When analysing opinions about monetary and material incentives, it is worth quoting an view expressed by yet another IDI participant, an owner of three businesses. *‘What’s needed is some added value. But I’m not into gadgets. And it’s not about money, either. This might be access to knowledge, to a periodical, getting a test which describes something. It should be something which is not accessible to all, such as a conference or a workshop. This could be some high profile thing, such as taking part in the presentation of results, a forum or something. I’d be willing to go to Warsaw and see such results.’* (IDI 11/2009. F, 35 y.o., university educ., business owner, city 500–999K). This verbatim statement shows that some sampled persons may be motivated to take part in a survey only by special kinds of incentives which are not commonly accessible and which would make them feel appreciated.<sup>4</sup>

The opinions collected in our studies indicate that at least some respondents in Poland expect some kind of reward in connection with their participation in a survey. This attitude is illustrated by these sample quotes: *‘/Incentives/ Well, that’s not a bad idea because you get some reward after all. A partial one. And you get that sense of satisfaction, too. If you didn’t get anything in return, you’d be left empty-handed. Someone came over, interrupted you, said ‘thank you’ but that’s all.’* (IDI 13/2007 M, 17 y.o., student, city 200–499K.; *‘It’s good that they have thought about me and they’re not just using me.’* (ESS 3. M, 59 y.o., city 500–999K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed).

The IDI participants, all of whom were either hard refusers, non-contacted persons or converted refusers, expressed mixed opinions about using monetary versus material incentives, with no opinion clearly prevailing. However, it is important to stress that our studies brought two essential findings. Firstly, the participants have different attitudes towards monetary incentives and towards gifts. Expectations regarding monetary incentives are very elevated and unrealistic for

the practice of survey research. Low monetary incentives, equivalent to a single-digit sum in euro, fail to drive participation. This was emphasised not only by those who liked the idea of using monetary incentives but also by some of those who liked gifts. This represents an essential difference versus the findings from the studies discussed in the introductory section of this paper, where an incentive of a single-digit sum in US dollars led to a considerable increase in the response rate. The participants of our studies viewed gifts differently: the value of gifts turns out to play no significant role. Moreover, the vast majority of IDI participants who accepted the idea to use gifts (even if they thought that monetary incentives were 'better') stressed that the gift should be small.

Another significant finding from our studies concerns the link between expected incentives and the type of fieldwork organisation and survey sponsor. In the case of public/governmental institutions and perhaps also other publicly funded organisations a small gift is considered appropriate. On the other hand, findings from a market study are 'a product' where the respondents contribute in the production process by giving their responses in a survey. Hence, some of them believe they deserve remuneration for this effort. While this difference in attitudes towards different types of studies was only recorded in two in-depth interviews, one may presume that as surveys become more common in Poland, the public will begin to differentiate their expectations regarding incentives, depending on the sponsor and the type of survey.

One other aspect of gifts, pointed out by some IDI participants, should be stressed here: the gifts should be quality items and should be carefully prepared. */What kinds of gifts?/ 'Things that people need that tend to break down quickly. A key ring, a good pen. But it should be a good one 'cause there is nothing worse than getting something really tacky.'* (IDI 3/2007. M, 31 y.o., secondary educ., police officer, city 200–499K); *'But it shouldn't be a balloon which will burst soon or one that you'll throw away right afterwards. It should be a durable item that you could use for some time.'* (IDI 8/2007. F, 28 y.o., univ. educ., acad. researcher, city 200–499K); */After looking at the advance letter and the gifts/ 'Letter/ It came in an elegant envelope, nicely printed.'* */Gifts/ 'Perfect, a very good choice. Really nice. If it had been done like that since the very beginning, I would've probably met her /the interviewer/.'* (IDI 9/2009. F, 33 y.o., university educ., business owner, city 200–499K).

## **PREPAID INCENTIVE: MAILED OR HANDED IN BY INTERVIEWERS?**

The studies presented in the introductory section of this paper indicate that a higher response rate is more likely to be achieved with prepaid incentives, usually mailed with an advance letter or a mail questionnaire, rather than with promised

incentives. With reference to the theory of social exchange, Dillman (2000: 19–20) explains that higher effectiveness of prepaid incentives stems from building a relationship of trust with the respondents. A researcher who sends ‘a small token of appreciation’ in advance to all sampled persons shows trust, and that creates stronger motivation for the sampled persons than a promise of an incentive to be offered after participating in an oral interview or after returning a mail questionnaire. A promised incentive is more likely to be perceived as payment for service and such payment usually occurs after the service has been rendered.

As mentioned earlier, respondent incentives in the ESS in Poland are offered unconditionally, i.e. the sampled persons receive an incentive regardless of their actual participation. The incentives are handed over by the interviewer, in contrast with prepaid incentives sent by mail. We have already explained the rationale behind using this approach. However, the incentive is not mentioned in the advance letter distributed to the sampled persons in Poland. The reason is that a modest gift might prove disappointing for the respondents if announced earlier. One might ask: is the solution adopted in Poland a good one?

While we know of no Polish experiments that could provide a direct answer to this question, our data from in-depth interviews and ESS-related methodological studies allow us to formulate a hypothesis.

The way of offering incentives to the sampled persons was not covered among the topics discussed in our IDIs. However, two participants spontaneously referred to that issue when talking about the advance letter: */After receiving the advance letter/ ‘The first reaction is always that of apprehension that someone is trying to cheat me or trick me into doing something. It makes me think of those marketing things. A salesperson here, a inquiry there ... I just wanted to check and read what this was all about to find things out and make sure it’s not a scam to make me pay money or something. /The letter/ It reassured me. There was no mention of any gifts or anything.’ (IDI 26/2007. M, 22 y.o., secondary educ., military man, city 200–499K); ‘The space for such surveys is spoilt by those mail order companies which tell you ‘You’ve won a prize’. They send you stuff and you need to pay them or call them, and they’re almost sending you car keys as if you’ve won a car. /.../ Blah, blah, you’ve won a prize. So if they tell me I’ve won something, I tell them ‘Oh, just keep it to yourself’. This is silly stuff, they want to trick you into calling them and then they charge you.’ /IDI 23/2007. M, 61 y.o., primary educ., retired, town 20–50K). Both comments centre around the same theme: concerns and distrust evoked by a mailing from an unknown sender. This is reminiscent of attempted fraud, attempts to obtain money under false pretences, as well as door-to-door selling and various kinds of marketing activities. Importantly, this kind of distrust may be experienced not only by elderly, socially isolated citizens. In fact, the first of the verbatim quotes comes from a young person in his early twenties. Undoubtedly,*



the advance letter came with an attached incentive or mentioned an incentive in connection with the survey, this would have reinforced such connotations in both cases, as expressly mentioned by the first of the IDI respondents.

The existence of distrust towards incentives attached to a letter seems to be confirmed by data about the response rate in follow-up surveys after ESS rounds 2, 3 and 4. In the case of ESS 2 and 3, the follow-up surveys were conducted after both the pilot and the main study whereas in the case of ESS 4 such a survey was conducted only after the main study. Within the follow-up survey, a short mail questionnaire with some questions repeated from the ESS was sent to non-respondents. No incentives were used in four of those follow-up surveys: after the pilot study and main study of ESS 2 (2004), after the pilot study of ESS 3 (2006) and after the main study of ESS 4 (2008). On the other hand, the mail questionnaire after the ESS 3 main study (2006) came with a small notepad with a fridge magnet bearing the logo of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences, and the ESS logo. It seems that the use of that incentive did not only fail to boost the response rate, but, in fact, may have reduced it. The response rates in the mail surveys where no incentive was used were as follows: 54.2% after the ESS 2 pilot study, 36.0% after the ESS 2 main study, 39.6% after the ESS 3 pilot study and 30.4% after the ESS 4 main study. In one mail survey where an incentive was actually used (after the ESS 3 main study) the response rate reached merely 24.2%, i.e. was lower than the rates achieved in all other follow-up surveys conducted by our team. If we compare that response rate with figures for surveys that were most adjacent in terms of timing, we will see that it is by over 15 points lower than the response rate in the survey conducted about six months earlier (after the ESS 3 pilot) and by 6 points lower than in the one conducted two years later (after the ESS 4 main study). Meanwhile, considering that the response rate in other surveys was declining gradually over the same period, one should have expected the response rate after ESS 3 to exceed 30%. The most likely reason behind such a low response rate in that follow-up survey (with incentive attached) is the distrust elicited by the presence of the gift. Some respondents may have decided not to return the questionnaire as they were afraid that they would have to pay for the incentive. Thus, they decided to claim they had received no questionnaire in case of any payment demands. Similar reactions were recorded among people who felt very disturbed by receiving an advance letter in connection with the ESS main study: they did not admit having received it at all when talking to the interviewer (Sztabiński et al. 2008).

Concerns and distrust evoked by a gift are also reflected in spontaneous reactions of some sampled persons, as recorded by interviewers in the ESS 3 and 5 main study. Such reactions were displayed by people from different age groups, living in different types of locations. *'I don't accept any gifts 'cause I'll have to*

*pay for them in a moment. They will nag me with phone calls or reminder letters. I've got bad life experience and I just can't believe there could be a free lunch.'* (ESS 5. F, 51 y.o., town 20–49K, gift rejected, refused to get interviewed); *'Aren't there any strings attached?'* (ESS 5. M, 54 y.o., town 50–99K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'Are you sure I don't have to pay anything for that?'* (ESS 5. F, 75 y.o., town 20–49K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'/Interviewer's comment/ At first, the respondent got frightened that he'd need to pay for the gift. After getting an explanation that this was a free gift and he'd get it no matter if he takes part or not, he looked relieved.'* (ESS 3. M, 79 y.o., city 200–499, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'/Interviewer's comment/ The respondent was trying to find a hidden agenda behind getting a gift. After getting an explanation that the gift was a kind of souvenir, he apologised and seemed happy.'* (ESS 3. M, 44 y.o., city 200–499, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'/Interviewer's comment/ The respondent asked repeatedly if he had to pay for the souvenir. He was a bit afraid.'* (ESS 3. M, 50 y.o., village, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed). As we explained earlier, the interviewers were instructed to hand the gift over and explain that it was a keepsake to remind the sampled persons of being drawn for the European Social Survey. It was hoped that such information should dispel doubts.

Those data show that some members of the public in Poland are distrustful about incentives used in connection with surveys. Data obtained from IDIs conducted in connection with the ESS (Sztabinski et al. 2008) suggest that this is because the respondents project their previous life experience onto surveys. They recall situations where they (or their family members or friends) were tricked by a person or a company who offered a reward or a special bargain, tried to make them pay money under false pretences etc. Information about such cases is also provided by the Polish mass media. Inhabitants of some Polish cities can see announcements in public transport warning them about strangers offering various kinds of benefits. Since attempted fraud of this kind is usually undertaken by telephone or mail, the respondents may be particularly sensitive to any similar elements in advance letters. Therefore, the idea to attach an incentive to an advance letter seems risky in Poland. In contrast, less risk is posed by an incentive handed over by an interviewer as the latter is likely to convince the respondent that the incentive is part of a standard procedure in that particular survey. However, as we will show later, there are many cases where the interviewers do not get a chance of offering an incentive to the sampled person, which reduces the likelihood of soliciting their participation. This is a limitation of the solution to offer an incentive in person versus send it by mail.

## **REACTIONS TO GIFTS IN THE ESS**

Before discussing the sampled persons' reactions to gifts we should make two reservations. Firstly, we discuss reactions to the sets of three gifts which were applied in subsequent ESS rounds. One may not exclude that reactions would have been different if different gifts had been used. However, the gifts used in the ESS seem to have been well chosen in general, perhaps except ESS 3 where the difference between the most preferred gift (calculator with a ruler) and the least preferred one (ball pen) totalled 35 points. In the remaining two rounds the respective difference did not exceed 11 points, which shows that the appeal of all gifts in ESS 4 and ESS 5 was quite comparable.

Another reservation concerns the data on reactions to gifts. In each ESS round, the interviewers did not get a chance to offer a gift to a fairly high percentage of the respondents. In ESS 3, the interviewers did not have an opportunity to offer a gift to 18.7% of the sampled persons, the respective percentage was 15.5% for ESS 4 and 13.9% for ESS 5. Those were situations when, for instance, the sampled person had changed address and the new address was impossible to establish, or when the sampled person had moved abroad or was absent throughout the fieldwork period (however, in such cases the interviewers did hand over a gift to a proxy hoping that this would facilitate contact with the respondent). Such situations also occurred in a very significant percentage of refusals i.e. very firm refusals, without any possibility to talk to the respondent and offer a gift. In ESS 3, the interviewers had no opportunity to offer a gift in the case of 39.5% of refusals, in ESS 4 the share totalled 40.2%, amounting to 31.3% of all refusals in ESS 5. Obviously, the reactions of the sampled persons to the gift, as shown later in this paper, do not cover those cases: we have only included cases when a gift was actually offered. Since, as we will show later, the vast majority of refusers who were offered a gift reacted negatively, one may assume that reactions would have been similar in the case of those hard refusers who were never offered a gift. Consequently, negative reactions are probably underestimated in the results presented below and, therefore, the picture of sampled persons' reactions to gifts is likely to be overly optimistic.

The reactions to gifts discussed here relate only to those sampled persons where there was a possibility to hold an interview. Thus, we have included actual respondents as well as non-contacts and refusals where the interviewer had an opportunity to offer a gift (either directly to the refuser or to a proxy). We decided not to include reactions from other individuals, where no interview was held (e.g. due to a health problem, a longer stay abroad, change of address within Poland) but who also sometimes received a gift from the interviewer (in person or through a proxy) as this would have blurred the overall picture of gift performance in the ESS. It is impossible to analyse the effectiveness of gifts in the case of people who are unable to take part in a survey for objective reasons.

Reactions displayed by the categories of sampled persons included in our analysis are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1** Sampled persons' reactions to gifts offered in ESS 3, 4 and 5 (percentages of mentions, based on interviewers' records)

ESS round	Very positive	Fairly positive	Neutral	Fairly negative	Very negative
ESS 3 (2006)	30.4	44.1	22.7	1.8	1.0
ESS 4 (2008)	26.0	43.0	24.4	3.1	3.4
ESS 5 (2010)	30.1	41.4	22.2	2.7	3.6

In all ESS rounds, reactions to gifts were fairly similar. Positive reactions strongly prevailed: they were displayed by nearly 70% to nearly 75% of the sampled persons who were offered a gift. Neutral reactions were recorded in the case of approx.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the sampled persons and this share is also stable. Negative reactions represent a minority in all rounds, yet their share in ESS 4 and 5 is somewhat higher than in ESS 3. Those data show that gifts offered in connection with a survey are generally viewed positively by the sampled persons.

However, some sampled persons who were offered a gift, refused to accept it. That percentage was 3.0% in ESS 3, 5.8% in ESS 4 and 5.7% in ESS 5. Interviewers' records suggest varying motivations behind the refusals. Apart from the aforementioned refusal to get anything in return for participating in a survey (such reward being considered inappropriate) and concerns that one will have to pay for the gift eventually in future, the respondents mentioned easy availability of such gifts elsewhere (*'I've got lots of such gadgets at work.'* (ESS 5. M, 37 y.o., town 10–19K, agreed to be interviewed), made dismissive comments about the gifts, possibly because of their low value (*'Why would I need such things?'* (ESS 5. F, 54 y.o., city 200–499K, refused to get interviewed); *'I don't need anything like that, we can afford to buy a calendar.'* (ESS 5. F, 39 y.o., town 100–199K, refused to get interviewed) or refused to accept a gift because they were not participating (*'I'm not taking part in this survey so I won't take a gift.'* (ESS 5. F, 42 y.o., city 500–999, refused to get interviewed).

A refusal to accept a gift does not always involve a negative reaction to the offer. While negative reactions strongly prevailed (ranging from nearly 65% to almost 70% of those who refused to accept it), yet approx. 30% of people in each ESS round reacted neutrally or, in individual cases, even positively despite refusing to accept the gift.

In order to assess the performance of gifts used in the ESS, we compared the percentages of completed interviews, refusals and non-contacts among the sampled persons who accepted the gift and those who rejected it. The respective data are provided in Tables 2 and 3.

**Table 2** Percentage of successfully completed interviews, refusals and non-contacts among the sampled persons who accepted the gift

ESS round	Completed interviews	Refusals	Non-contacts
ESS 3 (2006)	87.3	9.7	3.0
ESS 4 (2008)	92.0	7.1	0.9
ESS 5 (2010)	91.0	7.5	1.5

**Table 3** Percentage of successfully completed interviews, refusals and non-contacts among the sampled persons who rejected the gift

ESS round	Completed interviews	Refusals	Non-contacts
ESS 3 (2006)	6.6	88.5	4.9
ESS 4 (2008)	8.5	85.1	6.4
ESS 5 (2010)	2.9	91.3	5.8

As it could have been expected, agreement to take part in the survey co-occurs with acceptance of the gift whereas a refusal co-occurs with rejection. The percentage of successfully completed interviews among those who accepted the gift ranged from 87% to 92%. Only in relatively few cases, i.e. from 7% to under 10%, the sampled person refused to take part in the survey despite accepting the gift. In turn, rejection of the gift usually coincided with a refusal: in 85% to 91% of cases. Only about 3% to 8.5% of those who rejected the gift agreed to be interviewed. This suggests that acceptance of a gift is, indeed, connected with participation in the survey.

Based on the data presented here, it is difficult to draw an unambiguous conclusion that we are dealing with a cause-effect relationship. Quite possibly, the gift may have been accepted more often by individuals who had a positive attitude towards the survey and were willing to participate in it and rejected by those who demonstrated a negative attitude. On the other hand, some other results (not

shown here) indicate a strong relationship between reactions to the gift (positive, neutral or negative) and participation in the survey. Moreover, some comments made by the sampled persons clearly indicate a connection between acceptance or non-acceptance of the gift and participation in the survey. Here are some examples: */After accepting the gift/ 'Well, if you're being so nice, let's talk after all.'* (ESS 5. F, 86 y.o., town up to 10K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'Since I got such a pretty calendar, I must agree to do that survey.'* (ESS 5. F, 66 y.o., city 500–999K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'If one gets a gift, one needs to take part in that survey.'* (ESS 3. F, 46 y.o., city 500–999K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'I'm not taking part in this survey so I won't take a gift.'* (ESS 5. F, 42 y.o., city 500–999K, gift rejected, refused to get interviewed). We will return to this matter towards the end of this paper.

Moreover, the percentages of non-contacts in the two tables are worth noting. As mentioned earlier, in cases of non-contacts the interviewer was instructed to hand over the gift to a proxy or to another person contacted in an attempt to conduct an interview. Data from Tables 2 and 3 indicate that while the percentage of non-contacts among the sampled persons whose proxies accepted the gift is lower than the percentage of proxy rejections, yet the difference is not considerable. This result seems to confirm the findings from earlier discussed studies, whereby incentives in face-to-face surveys reduce non-contacts only slightly.

**Table 4** Topics of comments made by the sampled persons/proxies in connection with the gift offered\*

Comment category	ESS 3	ESS 4	ESS 5
Usefulness for the respondent (total)	37.0	37.8	33.7
of which: useless	0.4	1.0	0.6
Usefulness for wife, child, grandchild etc. (total)	16.3	13.2	10.0
of which: useless	0.0	0.6	0.3
Aesthetic impression (total)	6.9	13.6	14.2
of which: ugly	0.0	0.2	0.1
A keepsake, a souvenir (total)	13.1	14.3	18.6
Price/value (total)	3.2	6.1	8.1
of which: too low	0.5	1.5	0.9
Attempted bribe, distrust (total)	0.6	0.7	0.6
Other comments (total)	25.1	19.6	24.1

\* The percentages do not add up to 100% since some respondents made comments on more than one characteristic of the gifts.

Although the findings presented above do give some idea of the overall attitude towards gifts in surveys, they obviously refer only to gifts used in ESS 3, 4 and 5 in Poland. One pointer concerning the selection of gifts in other surveys may come from spontaneous comments made by the sampled persons in response to the interviewer's offer to leave a gift. Such comments reveal the characteristics of gifts which attracted attention. ESS interviewers in Poland were instructed to take down any such comments and classify them by the characteristics of gifts commented on. The frequencies of various kinds of comments are shown in Table 4. Percentages are based on the total number of individuals who were offered a gift.

The data provided in Table 4 show that comments related most frequently to the usefulness of the gift for the sampled person (more than 1/3 of all comments) or, less frequently, for a family member (10–16%). Here are some examples: *'I will have somewhere to write down dates of my doctor appointments.'* (ESS 5. M, 83 y.o., city 500–999K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'I'm going to use the torch for the car.'* (ESS 5. M, 25 y.o., town up to 10K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'It will come in handy but I don't agree to be interviewed.'* (ESS 5. M, 68 y.o., city 200–499, gift accepted, refused to get interviewed); *'It's going to be useful for my grandson.'* (ESS 5. F, 54 y.o., village, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'I'm gonna take the torch. My younger child will play with it in the meantime /during the interview/ so we'll have a quiet moment.'* (ESS 5. F, 40 y.o., town 20–49K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed). Far fewer comments indicated that the gift would be kept as a keepsake or a souvenir (13–18%) or concerned the aesthetic impression made by the gift (7–14%). Below are sample comments of this kind: *'A well-chosen gift. The image of the Polish Academy of Sciences building will remind me of participation in this study.'* (ESS 5. F, 56 y.o., city 100–199K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'I'm very lonely and the calendar will remind me of the nice interviewer lady and of the survey. I was really afraid of the survey but first the director /in the advance letter/, and then you made it a very nice experience for me.'* (ESS 5. F, 26 y.o., town 50–99K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'A nice keepsake for all year long.'* (ESS 5. F, 60 y.o., city over 1 million, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'I like the calendar; it's nice 'cause the numbers are large.'* (ESS 5. M, 60 y.o., village, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'A nice, tasteful gift.'* (ESS 5. M, 31 y.o., town up to 10K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'The view in the calendar could be more pleasant.'* (ESS 5. M, 51 y.o., village, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed).

Comments concerning the price/value of the gift in the ESS were made very rarely yet their frequency increased from round to round. Presumably, the rare occurrence of such comments is related to the social norm which prescribes that it is not appropriate to comment on the value of a gift. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that the reservations about the low value of the gifts are infrequent and

stable. Here are some examples of remarks on price/value: *'They could have tried harder.'* (ESS 5. F, 53 y.o., town 20–49K, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'Thanks but that's not needed. Unnecessary costs.'* (ESS 5. F, 36 y.o., village, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed); *'A cheap gadget, but it's very useful and it's got a very nice colour.'* (ESS 5. F, 24 y.o., city over 1 million, gift accepted, agreed to be interviewed).

Sample comments indicating distrust experienced in connection with the gifts were given earlier.

Two issues deserve attention in connection with the data presented in Table 4. Firstly, critical comments about the gifts were made relatively rarely and concerned the general use of gifts in a survey rather than characteristics of specific gifts used in the ESS. This might stem from the social norm that one should not criticise presents (*'Don't look a gift horse in the mouth'*). Secondly, although the data presented here come only from three rounds of the ESS, completed over a period of four years, comments elicited by the gifts seem to indicate a change in the perception of such gifts. Usefulness becomes less important, especially if the respondent intends to give the gift away to someone else, whereas the aesthetic impression and the keepsake value gains importance. Presumably, this is connected with the increasing affluence of the Polish society. Moreover, the finding shows that the appeal of gifts changes over time, and this should be taken into consideration, especially when running repetitive surveys.

Summing up, the behaviours displayed by sampled persons and recorded by interviewers in connection with the ESS gifts indicate that it is reasonable to apply gifts in surveys conducted in Poland. Positive reactions to gifts strongly prevail and acceptance usually entails consent to survey participation. This leads to an obvious practical conclusion that when making their introductory speech the interviewers should try and convince the sampled person to accept the gift. The rules to be followed by interviewers at this stage should be covered extensively during interviewer briefing. Comments made by the sampled persons in connection with gifts also provide some tips regarding the choice of gift items. Usefulness is the primary concern but the aesthetic impression plays an increasingly important role. The role of the gift as a keepsake becomes important for the vast majority of the respondents. This might be specific to Poland where there is no face-to-face oversurveying and incentives are used very rarely in surveys. Certainly, a ball pen does not make a good gift. Only 21% of the sampled persons in ESS 3 chose the foldable pen on a lanyard which seemed to be an attractive item otherwise.



## **THE USE OF GIFTS AND THE SAMPLE COMPOSITION**

The suggestions regarding the use of incentives in Poland, based on our studies and analyses, may give rise to doubts if left without checking how the use of incentives affects the sample composition. After all, the idea is not only about boosting the response rate but also about ensuring that the effective sample is balanced, i.e. similar to the general population. Meanwhile, an incentive may be a more convincing argument for some categories of the sampled persons than for others and, as a result, such sampled persons may be overrepresented in the effective sample.

In order to assess the impact of gifts on sample composition, we compared the data for the entire sample drawn (or from the total population) and data for the part of the sample which was effectively interviewed in ESS 3, 4 and 5, where gifts were used. Similar comparisons were made for ESS 1 and 2, where no gifts were used, as a frame of reference for the results obtained with respect to ESS 3, 4 and 5.

Comparisons take account of four demographic characteristics: gender, age, domicile and level of education, as well as cross-tabulations of selected characteristics. As regards the first three demographics, information on their distribution in the total sample drawn was available. In contrast, information on education in the sample was not available, we used the total population data (from the national census) for our comparisons. However, since the available census data date back to 2002 (more recent data are not available), we skipped analyses involving education for ESS 5 as it was conducted in 2010.

In our analyses we applied dissimilarity indices which show the percentage of people in the contingency table that should be classified into another cell to achieve the distribution of the effective sample which is the same as in the total sample drawn/population. The results of our analyses are given in Table 5.

In ESS rounds 3, 4 and 5 (as in ESS rounds 1 and 2), the gender structure in the effective sample is very close to that of the sample drawn. For instance, in the effective sample of ESS 3 only 0.3% of people should be classified differently to achieve a gender distribution which is identical to the distribution of the gender variable in the total sample drawn.

As regards age and gender-by-age, those differences are somewhat more marked but also relatively low. Moreover, the sizes of differences in those rounds are similar to differences recorded in the first two rounds of ESS (rounds 1 and 2) where no gifts were used. The greatest differences occur in ESS 4. In order to run a more precise comparison between the structure of effective sample and the drawn sample in terms of age, we conducted a more detailed analysis of those categories where the differences were most significant. For this purpose, we used differences in percentages for various categories between the effective sample and

the drawn sample.<sup>5</sup> The results of this comparison between the effective sample and drawn sample for age are presented in Appendix 1.

**Table 5** Structure of effective sample versus drawn sample/population (dissimilarity indices)

Demographics	ESS 1	ESS 2	ESS 3	ESS 4	ESS 5
	Gifts not used		Gifts used		
Gender*	0.3	0.9	0.3	0.4	0.4
Age*	2.7	2.3	2.6	3.9	3.0
Gender x Age*	3.0	2.7	2.8	4.2	3.7
Domicile*	7.1	4.3	6.0	5.2	4.1
Gender x Domicile*	7.5	4.5	6.0	5.3	4.2
Age x Domicile*	8.6	6.0	6.6	7.5	6.3
Gender x Age x Domicile*	9.0	7.3	7.4	8.3	7.7
Level of education**	3.0	3.6	4.1	8.1	x

\* Structure of the effective sample compared against the sample drawn

\*\* Structure of the effective sample compared against population aged 15+. The source of population data: Polish National Census 2002 (more recent data for the total population are not available)

Overall, the dissimilarity index is quite comparable for subsequent survey rounds. In comparison with ESS 1 and 2 (no gifts offered) there is a more marked underrepresentation of the 35–44 age category in ESS 4 but this result is not repeated in ESS 3 or 5. Therefore, this change is incidental. On the other hand, the category of individuals aged 25–34 is relatively more underrepresented in all rounds where gifts were handed in, most notably in ESS 3. On the other hand, it was somewhat easier to complete an interview with individuals aged over 65 in ESS 3, 4 and 5 versus ESS 1 and 2. This would indicate that gifts provide a somewhat stronger incentive for survey participation among more mature individuals yet one cannot exclude that those differences are driven by other factors. And, again, those changes are not very significant. Therefore, it seems that the use of gifts did not affect the sample composition significantly in terms of either gender or age.

Slightly greater discrepancies occur in the case of domicile as well as sample structure by domicile and age. However, also in this case we cannot talk about systematic differences between ESS 1 and 2, where gifts were not offered, and the rounds where they were offered (ESS 3, 4 and 5). As regards domicile, differences in ESS 3 are slightly more marked than those in ESS 2, yet they

are also less marked than in ESS 1. Similar conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of dissimilarities in percentages for various categories of domicile (see Appendix 2). In all ESS rounds, with or without gifts, the same trends were found: a slight overrepresentation of residents from rural areas in the sample and a slight underrepresentation of inhabitants from large and the largest cities. In rounds where gifts were used, underrepresentation of inhabitants from Warsaw (the only city in Poland with the population over 1 million) is slightly weaker but this trend is not very marked. Therefore, it seems that the use of gifts indeed had no effect on sample composition in terms of domicile.

As regards education, we relied on the data for the total population from the Polish National Census 2002. Considerable differences were found for this characteristic in ESS 3 and 4 (where gifts were used). Importantly, those differences are more marked than in ESS 1 and 2, where gifts were not used (see Table 5). This may indicate that they are connected with the use of gifts.

The differences in percentages between the effective sample and the total population for various categories of education are given in Appendix 3. The greatest difference occurs with regard to tertiary education. In the effective sample, this category is overrepresented in each round of the survey. However, while the 'surplus' of those individuals for ESS rounds 1 and 2 is relatively small, it becomes significant in ESS 4: the difference between the percentage of people with tertiary education in the effective sample and the corresponding percentage in the total population exceeds 6 points. On the other hand, the effective sample in ESS 4 had the relatively lowest percentage of less educated respondents.

When interpreting those results, it is important to bear in mind that the available data on the population refer to a situation which prevailed some years earlier. As mentioned earlier, the education data for the total population date back to 2002, whereas ESS 3 and 4 (where gifts were used) were conducted in 2006 and 2008 respectively. Given that in the last decade or so the young generation of Poles flocked to tertiary education institutions whereas the percentage of those settling for lower secondary education dropped, the differences revealed in this research do not necessarily stem from the use of gifts. Instead, they may also derive from changes in the education structure of the total population. The percentage of people with tertiary education in Poland nearly doubled between 2002 and 2008 (from 11.1% to 19.3%), which was accompanied by a slight decline in the share of Poles with lower secondary education (from 23.8% to 21.9%) and a significant decline in the percentage of people with primary education (from 28.0% to 18.0%) (Demographic Yearbook of Poland 2011).

Moreover, the hypothesis about a relationship between the direction of changes found for the aforementioned categories of education and the use of gifts seems dubious. If we accepted this hypothesis, it would mean that gifts are more effective

among educated people (overrepresentation at the level of tertiary education) than among those with low education (who were underrepresented). Such a claim would also contradict the findings from the aforementioned studies (cf. also Singer 2002b).

Summing up, the presented results of our research are not sufficient to claim that the use of gifts affects the effective sample in terms of education structure. The differences between the effective sample and the drawn sample in the case of ESS 2 and ESS 3 are not substantial. More serious differences are observed, for instance, between ESS 2 and 4, but they may generally result from the fact that the education data regarding the total population are somewhat outdated.

It is important to stress, however, that the aforementioned analyses do not unambiguously determine whether the use of gifts affects the structure of the effective sample in terms of demographic characteristics or not. Rounds 1 and 2 of the European Social Survey in Poland differed from the subsequent rounds not only in that no gifts were used. Also, only one advance letter was used in ESS 1 and 2 whereas two letters were distributed in the subsequent rounds. Moreover, as ESS rounds were fielded in different years, there is no way of excluding some other factors which may have affected the structure of the effective sample. Nevertheless, our analyses do not offer any clear foundation to claim that the gifts used in Poland in ESS Rounds 3, 4 and 5 led to any significant changes to sample composition.

## **SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION**

Two theories of survey participation are most widespread in survey methodology. According to Leverage-Salience theory (Groves et al. 2000, Groves et al. 2006) a decision to participate in a survey is influenced by broadly understood predispositions which derive from group norms, personality traits, social status, individual experience etc. Some of those predispositions have a more central character whereas others are less central for the sampled person. When an interviewer approaches someone with a survey participation request, information about the survey provided during the introductory speech as well as the interviewer's traits (age, gender etc.) activate those predispositions, making some of them more salient than others. In this way, predispositions encouraging survey participation or those which prompt a refusal may be activated. The significance of each of those predispositions during a survey request is a joint function of their importance (centrality) for the sampled person, the fact that the predisposition has a positive or a negative effect on the participation decision and of how salient the predisposition becomes during the introductory speech. If the activated predispositions are predominantly positive in terms of centrality and saliency, the sampled person will

accept the participation request. However, if negative predispositions have more weight, the interviewer's request will be rejected.

According to the second theory explaining survey participation, i.e. the theory of social exchange elaborated by Dillman (1978, 2000), people's actions are motivated by the expectation that they will elicit the expected return actions from other people. Three elements play a role when predicting other people's actions: broadly understood rewards expected in connection with taking action, the costs (in the broad sense) to be incurred in order to receive a reward and the trust that the reward will outweigh the costs in the long run.

Dillman introduces a distinction which plays a key role in his theory, namely the distinction between economic exchange and social exchange. The economic exchange is based on a monetary equivalent for a specific action (such as giving an interview, for instance). In turn, social exchange is more vague and the decision about 'returning the kindness' is left for the person who takes part in the exchange. This theory, however, is not about a simple distinction between using monetary incentives and other kinds of incentives. Rather, the essence of social exchange is to establish trust between its participants (2000: 14).

The results of our studies concerning the use of incentives in Poland generally confirm the theory of social exchange. Approximately 90% of the sampled persons who accepted the gift in the ESS, i.e. agreed to establish a social exchange relationship, also agreed to take part in the survey. Moreover, approx. 90% of the sampled persons who refused to accept the gift also refused to take part in the survey. The sense of commitment in connection with the gift is demonstrated not only in the reactions of the sampled persons who accepted it and agreed to take part or rejected the gift and refused to participate. Such sense of obligation also occurred among some people who accepted the gift but refused to take part in the survey. Here are some verbatim statements illustrating this claim: *'I felt awkward. I said 'no' because I didn't take part and I didn't help her but she said that made no difference and she had to give that thing to me anyway.'* (IDI 1/2007, F, 36 y.o., basic vocat. educ., homemaker, city 500–999K); */I felt/ Dreadful, really dreadful. I refused to take part but that woman /interviewer/ gave me a gift anyway. /.../ If she had tried to contact me again, by mail, or even by leaving her phone number, I would have contacted her back for sure.'* (IDI 8/2007, F, 28 y.o., univ. educ., acad. researcher, city 200–499K). This shows that during the introductory speech the interviewers should first try and encourage the sampled person to accept the gift (as this will create a sense of obligation) instead of trying to obtain quick consent.

However, there is a crucial difference between Poland and the United States in the way social exchange and economic exchange are understood. While a prepaid monetary incentive of a few US dollars, mailed with an advance letter, builds an

atmosphere of trust and helps to establish social exchange, money unambiguously implies an economic exchange in Poland. When asked about the size of a monetary incentive, the IDI participants usually mentioned very high sums of money, even € 20–25 or more, and some made calculations, depending on the duration of the interview. At the same time, all IDI participants, including those who favoured the use of gifts, claimed that a small monetary incentive (equivalent of a single-digit sum in euro) would not encourage them to take part in a survey. The reverse trend was observed in the case of gifts, i.e. IDI participants, including some of those who favoured a monetary incentive, stressed that a gift should be modest and not costly. Also, the sampled person's comments recorded by interviewers during the fieldwork indicate that ESS participants very rarely made any comments about the value of the gifts offered. Therefore, it seems that gifts in Poland are treated as a present and, as such, do not imply an economic exchange, unlike monetary incentives. Therefore, the results of our studies indicate that gifts are a reasonable solution in Poland, considering the budgets realistically available to researchers in surveys. A token monetary incentive, equivalent to the value of the gift or even somewhat higher, would not motivate the sampled persons to take part.

The conclusion presented above with regard to small gifts may, however, partly result from the fact that the IDIs referred to a study conducted by an academic institution (Polish Academy of Sciences). This possibility is suggested in spontaneous comments concerning the differentiation of incentives used depending on the type of sponsor. If an academic institution financed by the government is the sponsor, the sampled persons are willing to settle for a modest, inexpensive gift: distribution of expensive incentives would be a waste of public money. On the other hand, when surveys are conducted by commercial institutes which sell the results of their surveys, the expectations regarding incentives are much more elevated. In our IDIs, such comments were rare but the respondents increasingly articulate their expectation to receive a high monetary incentive in commercial surveys. This shows that expectations regarding an incentive depend on the type of sponsor, at least for some members of the public in Poland. In terms of exchange, the type of sponsor or the kind of survey (commercial versus non-commercial) may determine whether respondent incentives are treated in terms of social exchange or economic exchange.

Apart from the different understanding of social and economic exchange in Poland versus other countries, a specific Polish characteristic is that some members of the Polish society are distrustful towards prepaid incentives, especially those distributed by mail. While this was not the focus of our research, the data we collected seem to indicate that prepaid incentives (distributed before the interview), and even a mention of such incentives in the advance letter, may prompt the recipients to think about direct marketing, attempted fraud or scams. Although

such reactions to interviewers' handing over gifts before the interview were rare, they seem to be much more common in the case of mailings and telephone conversations. Therefore, it does not seem that the use of prepaid incentives in Poland could help to establish a relationship based on social exchange and, thus, drive the response rate higher.

The use of gifts in the ESS in Poland did not affect the sample composition significantly, i.e. it neither improved nor deteriorated the response rate versus the earlier ESS rounds where incentives were not used. Only one of the four characteristics included in the analysis (level of education) revealed a more marked difference between the distributions for the effective sample and the total population versus the previous rounds, and this difference may be attributable to the use of gifts. This result is in line with the findings of previously mentioned studies on this subject.

## NOTES

- \* The first draft of this paper was presented during the Fourth European Survey Research Association Conference in Lausanne, held on 18–22 July 2011. Research for this paper was conducted under the ESS methodological research programme (Joint Research Activities) 'Improving Representativeness and Response' and under a grant from the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education (163/N-ESS/2008/0).
- 1 Various authors adopt a different understanding of 'material incentives'. In his meta-analysis, Church (1993: 65) makes the following assumption: 'monetary surveys consisted of those using cash or checks, while non-monetary incentives were defined as those studies that used any extra item as an incentive above and beyond the normal procedure for most mail surveys.' Therefore, it seems that lottery tickets were considered to be a material incentive. They are treated similarly by Brennan and Charbonneau, who also included discount coupons among material incentives (2009: 369). In contrast, Singer et al. (1999: 221) consider lottery tickets to be a monetary incentive.
- 2 The response rate in ESS is computed by deducting the ineligible from the selected sample. In the case of the sample used in Poland, ineligible cover situations when the respondent had deceased, the address was not occupied by the respondent (unoccupied/demolished/not yet built), the respondent had emigrated/left the country for a long period of time or when the respondent resided in an institution (cf. 'European Social Survey, Round 5. Specification for participating countries', downloadable from [www.europeansocialsurvey.org](http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org))
- 3 Another hypothesis, albeit less probable, explaining the absence of differences between the experimental group and the control group is that interviewers did not hand over the gifts to pre-defined sampled persons (as was the case in the experiment) but to those who were more or less reluctant. Therefore, it was possible for the interviewers to obtain consent more easily.
- 4 Considering such specific categories of respondents, each interviewer in ESS 5 received a standard set of gifts and, additionally, a brochure containing a short discussion of some results from previous ESS rounds. The brochure was printed on chalk paper and featured colourful charts. The respondents who were not interested in gifts but showed interest in the brochure received a special letter thanking them for their interest in the survey and

in the brochure. In total, the letter was distributed to 18 individuals from various circles, including researchers, teachers and university students. The idea of sending a brochure with the advance letter to all the respondents is not reasonable, as illustrated by the following comment from an IDI participant: 'An info brochure of that size is doomed to failure. There's lots to read. That's not even a failure, that's a misunderstanding.' (IDI 3/2007. M, 31 y.o., secondary educ., police administrator, city 200–499K)

- 5 The differences in percentages indicate a simple difference between the percentage for a category in the effective sample and the analogous percentage in the drawn sample. Positive values show that the effective sample has an overrepresentation of people from that particular category whereas negative values indicate the opposite situation. Those values correspond with the dissimilarity index or, more precisely, this measure is equal to a half of the sum of absolute values of differences in percentages for all categories identified for a particular variable. In the Appendix, the differences in percentages for various categories are given together with percentages of individuals in each category in the effective sample. This helps us to show whether, for instance, a dissimilarity of 1% refers to a category which represents 5% or 20%. It is obvious that in the latter case such a change would be relatively less significant.

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## APPENDIX 1

Comparison of achieved sample and drawn sample: Age. Differences in percentages\* and shares of categories in the sample drawn (in brackets).

Age	ESS 1	ESS 2	ESS 3	ESS 4	ESS 5
	Gifts not used		Gifts used		
15–24	1.9 (19.9)	1.8 (19.4)	1.1 (19.3)	1.9 (17.8)	2.4 (16.6)
25–34	-0.4 (16.5)	-0.1 (18.5)	-2.1 (18.3)	-1.7 (19.2)	-1.3 (19.4)
35–44	-1.0 (17.1)	0.2 (15.9)	-0.4 (15.2)	-2.2 (14.9)	-1.2 (15.4)
45–54	0.3 (18.7)	-0.4 (18.8)	0.0 (19)	0.3 (18.0)	0.1 (17.1)
55–64	0.5 (11.2)	0.3 (12.0)	1.0 (12.5)	0.7 (13.9)	0.0 (15.5)
65–74	-0.6 (9.9)	-0.9 (9.3)	0.2 (9.6)	0.7 (8.9)	0.6 (8.6)
75 and older	-0.7 (6.7)	-0.9 (6.0)	0.3 (6.1)	0.3 (7.3)	-0.5 (7.6)

\* Positive values indicate that individuals from the particular category of age are overrepresented in the effective sample. For instance, in ESS 1 the percentage of people aged 15–24 was 21.8% in the effective sample and 19.9% in the total sample (in brackets). Thus, the difference between the percentages is 1.9%.

## APPENDIX 2

Comparison of achieved sample and drawn sample: Domicile. Differences in percentages\* and shares of categories in the sample drawn (in brackets).

Domicile	ESS 1	ESS 2	ESS 3	ESS 4	ESS 5
	Gifts not used		Gifts used		
Rural areas	6.7 (31.0)	4.3 (32.5)	5.6 (32.9)	4.5 (32.8)	3.6 (33.1)
Urban areas below 20,000	0.2 (12.1)	-0.4 (12.2)	-0.9 (11.5)	-0.5 (13.0)	0.5 (13.1)
Urban areas 20,000–99,999	0.2 (20.6)	-0.6 (19.7)	0.4 (18.7)	0.7 (19.4)	-1.2 (19.4)
Urban areas 100,000–499,999	-4.2 (21.2)	-1.1 (20.7)	-2.8 (21.6)	-2.7 (20.6)	-1.4 (20.6)
Urban areas 500,000–999,999	-1.6 (9.2)	-1.3 (8.9)	-1.4 (9.1)	-2.1 (8.6)	-1.3 (8.5)
Urban areas over 1 million	-1.3 (6.0)	-0.9 (6)	-0.8 (6.2)	0.0 (5.5)	-0.3 (5.4)

\* Positive values indicate that individuals from the particular category of domicile are overrepresented in the effective sample. Interpretation of values is the same as in the footnote in Appendix 1.

### APPENDIX 3

Comparison of achieved sample and total population: Level of education. Differences in percentages\* and shares of categories in the total population in 2002 (in brackets).

Level of education	ESS 1	ESS 2	ESS 3	ESS 4
	Gifts not used		Gifts used	
Incomplete primary	1.4 (2.9)	-0.9	0.1	-0.5
Primary or first stage of basic	-0.7 (28.8)	-2.2	-1.7	-4.8
Lower secondary	0.6 (24.6)	2.1	2.5	-1.7
Upper secondary	-2.3 (30.0)	-0.5	-2.3	-1.1
Post-secondary, not tertiary	0.8 3.3)	1.2	0.5	1.7
First & second stage of tertiary	0.3 (10.5)	0.3	0.9	6.4

\* Positive values indicate that individuals from the particular category of education are overrepresented in the effective sample. Interpretation of values is the same as in the footnote in Appendix 1 yet the difference is that the figures in brackets concern the data on the total population of individuals aged 15+ from the National Census 2002.